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KINGSTON ONTARIO CANADA

A
L E T T E R
TO A

Member of Parliament,
Concerning the true Interest of *Scotland*, with Respect to the *Succession*

Sir,

SEEING at your Election, you shew'd a willingness to receive Advice from your Constituents, and among others desir'd me to tell you my Thoughts about any weighty matters, that came before the *Parliament*; Forbearing at this time to Speak of other business, I shall give my Opinion upon that of the *Succession*

In the first place; by Our *Claim of Right*, which is the *Fundamental Charter* of our present *Constitution*, no *Papist* can be King of this *Realme*, which necessarily excludes all these of the *Royal line*, till we come to the *House of Hanover*. Next we take it for granted that by the *Abdication* of King *James the VII.* and his *Mismanagement* of the *Government*, the *Ancient Constitution* dissolv'd, so as the People might without Respect to any Order, take such of the *Royal Family* they pleas'd; and if none be found to answer their *End of Government*, it was in their Power to choose another. Our practice, at the *late Revolution*, did demonstrate that this was the receav'd Opinion of the Nation. Now, the

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Settlement at that time went no higher, than her present Majesty, and the *Descendents* of her Body, after whose Decese, without Issue, the *Government* devolves upon the People: So that the present Consideration is, about providing for a Successor after her Majesty.

Ever since K. *James VI.* his Accession to the Crown of *England* this Nation has Decay'd: I need not prove this, for it is not our, The cause is also obvious; the *English* being the Richer Nation, and having an Interest not only different but quite opposite to ours, in all deliberations of the State, at home and abroad, have crossed our encrease of Trade and Power: Our preferments, Posts and Offices have been giv'n to such only as would comply with the Designs, and were according to th' inclination of an *English* Court; our Money has been spent at *London* without return; our Men have Fought and gain'd their Battels; without a suitable reward; they've taken all the ways possible to diminish and at length to suppress our Traffick, by discouraging Forraign Commerce; Confiscating our Ships, & prohibiting our Domestick Commodities, forcing our Seamen, not treating us as Allies & Friends, but worse than the basest of their Subjects, & in such manner as they durst not do to the Subjects of any Prince in *Europe*. The Leagues we had Abroad are now out of Memory, our Alliance & priviledges in *France* are now no more, & tho' we declare War at their pleasure, no notice is taken of us, at a conclusion of Peace: And at this time when we seem to Stickle at a continuance under the same Government, they threaten to force us to a Compliance, by reviving th' old quarrel of an imaginary Dependence proven from forg'd evidens, which indeed is ground enough for a Powerful and Ambitious Neighbour to make War upon the weaker. These matters of Fact are clear, & instances of 'em ev'ry where may be found So that every true hearted *Scotts-Man* should aim at a Restitution of the honour and interest of their Country

they, as it was before the Year 1603. by making a total Separation from *England*, or doing outmost Endeavours to make a Condition of the continuing in the same Government, such as will prevent th' evils we just now hinted at. Many members are for waiting the Queen's Decease, e're *Scotland* name a Successor: others are for making a present Nomination. I shall briefly examine the Reasons of both.

Those who are for the first Opinion, design that *England* may invite us to a *Coalition* in Government, and offer us Conditions of *Union*, either *Federal* or *Incorporated*; This were to be desired; but while the English Court think they can get us at a cheaper Rate, they'll not venture at the least Share of their Trade to win us, and they banter so high; as at their Cups to tell, that *half a Crown is Bribe enough for a Scots Man*; The leaving the *Succession* undeclar'd, may occasion a great Confusion after Her Majestys decease: we find we have been shifted by the *English* hitherto, who have made *seam Proposals* of an *Union* without any intention of coming into it, designing only thereby to bring us into the *Noose* and the *Net*, after which, they remove the *Bait*. It were however to be wished, That You & the other honourable Members of Parliament would enter into a Resolution, never to name the Prince who is named Successor to the Crown of *England*, till th' Articles of *Union* were agreed to; and therefore to defer a *Nomination*, till such time as the matter be laid before the *English Parliament*, and to name in the mean time, Commissioners for an *Union*, who may wait on Her Majesty, with *Instructions* to settle on the Terms, That if Commissioners of both Kingdoms agree, th' Articles may be ratified in both *Parliaments*; & let it be one of the clauses in the *Contract of Union*, That both Kingdoms shall be under *one Head & Prince*, & enjoy the Priviledges of an *Incorporated People*. This will shew, whether or not the *English* be sincere; For I take it as granted, That if we do not better our Condi-

on at this time, with respect to *Commerce* and *Trade* with *England*, all other specious *Priviledges* and *Limitations* will be but Amusements for Children, and we'll at length become the most despicable and poor People in the World. So that I hope no true hearted *Scots-Man*, will be for continuing in the same *Government* with *England*, upon the Foot we have had it hitherto: Many Members are of this mind, but the fear they have of a *Popish Successor*, make them think it not expedient to vary with *England*; and next they see the Proposition of not naming at present the *Successor*, is promoted by persons who were not among the first who declar'd for the *present Settlement*, and on that head it is suspected: But I intreat you, & all the other Members, to act in this Matter with an impartial & unbiass'd Judgment, & examine the Proposition it self, without respect to the Proponents. That some who in their Hearts are favourers of a Prince of *Wales* may be among those who are against a present Nomination is not to be doubted, but that does not make the Counsel evil, and the Authors suspected, and therefore ought to be follow'd, if it be for the good of the Nation. I'm of Opinion, That at this time we should not name a *Successor*, but declare, That if a Treaty of *Union* be concluded with *England*, that we shall in the next Session ratify the Agreement, and name as King of *Scotland* after Her Majesty the Prince who is design'd to succeed in *England*: For I hope you & ev'ry honest Member may be convinc'd from the Treatment we have met with from *England* hitherto, if we once declare for their King, there shall be no more word of an *Union*, as it far'd with us at the *Revolution*.

I always suppose that those who are for a present Nomination have nothing in their View, save the security of the Nation against th' intreagues of *St. Germans*, and that they do not designe to subject this Kingdom to an *English Power*;

so that except an Union can be compass'd, or at least a Communion of Trade, They'll never Vote for a continuance under one Head. And therefore, if there must be a Nomination, seeing there are other Princes & Princesses of the Royal Blood, besides the Princess *Sophia of Hanover*, let us take a younger Brother or Sister, & declare him or her Successour to the Crown of *Scotland*, provided they be not call'd to the Crown of *England*, & if at any time it should fall out, that the King or Queen of *Scotland* should succeed to the Crown of *England*, then to make such Provisions, as th' Eldest or second Son or Daughter shall be King of *Scotland*, Independent, or without conjunction with *England*. So that when we cannot get an Union, all ways possible care should be taken to recover and advance the Glory and welfare of our Native Country, in a State and Government separate from that of *England*; For all honest men may see that if this opportunity slip, we're of all Men the most Miserable. And our Laws, Offices and Preferments, the Model of our Church Government, as well as that of our State, will be at the Disposal of an *English* Court: and it may fall out that those who shall contribute thus much to the misery of their Countrey, shall be first sharers of the Calamity; from which I pray God avert all good Patriots.

I know, these real and Inevitable evils, which I foresee will necessarily fall on our native Country, are by some palliated with Limitations on the Successor, and they tell you that whosoever be King, these will be the best preservatives of Liberty, Property & Religion. I pay great respect to the Monarchy & the Majesty of a Prince, but when an *English* Monarch, is for his own peace & quiet, forc'd to humour an *English* Parliament, how can he observe these restrictions when they cross the interest of that Nation? And will he not rather choose to wrong us, than disoblidge them? Let us call to mind the case of *Darien*, so much asserted by us

to be our Right, and still oppos'd by such as should have protected us in it, at th' Infligation of th' *Englisk*, till now it is come to nothing: No Prince will stick to accept of a Kingdom upon any Conditions, how hard soever, and after he's peaceably Seated in it, the first endeavour is to shake off the unnatural Chains: for to tell the truth, the very thought of Limitation and Restriction as against Natural Liberty, is odious to a free born Soul, whither Prince or Subject. But let us suppose a Prince did not observe these *pacta conventa*, or by making a Party in a Parliament get himself declared free, who is so bold as to Vindicate the Peoples Right? shall we Act so as *Scotland*, may one time or other become a Field of Blood & Vastation as *Poland* is at this Day on account of the Encroachments on the People & the Breach of *pacta conventa*? No! we're degenerated from the gravity of our Ancestors, who I'm sure would never Act as we're like to do at present, There's little to be rely'd on the Integrity of most of Princes, who are not over observant of their Vows & Promises when they thwart their Inclinations, which are always Violent, and oppose their *Interest*, which is the Rule of their acting. What specious *Promises* were made us, to Comply with the King of *England* at the Revolution? & after we had declar'd, there was not one step made towards a performance: Witness, King *James* the VII's Promises to his People in relation to His and our Religion. King *Charles* II. took the Covenant, without which he could not have been Crown'd at *Scoon*, & we all know how faithfully he kept it: King *James* VI. when he went to take possession of *England*, promis'd to his Antient Kingdom to visite them once in the three years, but being overruled by *Englisk* Influence was at very little concern in keeping it. The *French* King's return to the *Hugenots* of *France*, for their faithful Service against the Prince of *Conde*, and his annulling the most solemn Act of their Favours, th' Edict of *Nantz*; And taking from them the

the Cautionary Towns. These with Thousands of other Instances, may serve for a proof, That the Limitation of a Prince, is scarce practicable, and the Contracts betwixt King and People are very slender Securities.

The greatest safety lyes in the Vertue and probity of the Prince, who employs his power to no other end but to make his People happy: for power is like Fire and Water good or evil, as th' Agent pleases to employ it.

There's not a government in the World, where in there are not, some time or other, *Egregious* mismanagements; and tho' I could instance in the late and Preceeding Reigns, Yet who dare so much as Name them? It is true the late Revolution had a prosperous issue, which gave it the name of Happy. Whereas, had it had the same event with the Invasions by *Monmouth* and *Argyle*, it would have been call'd a most wicked *Rebellion*. The best Principle of Government is, that a Prince have Freedom and Liberty to act for the good of his People, and that he be not fetter'd and so limited by Laws, whereby it may be said, That he can be forc'd to rule well: For no man, much less Princes, can endure to be *forc'd* to do any Thing, yea even that which is good. It is most uneasy for a Prince that rules two people, of different yea opposite humours and interests, to please both, and consult their wellfare equally. And examples in history do shew, That the weakest and poorest side is made a sacrifice to the more powerfull. This has been our Case these hundred years past, There's now an occasion of retrieving our *State*, Let us Either be separated altogether as we were before that time, or let us have an Honourable *Union*, such as will make the interests of Both Nations to concur, That hereafter we be not as two separat Nations: and as we are in one Continent, so let us become one People; & till this latter be compass'd, it shall not seem good Policy, to name for our Successor, that Prince who is call'd to the Crown of *England*.
I am, &c.







